A SHORT CHARACTER OF Mrs. Mary Dolins,

Who was Born *February* 2. 1703. and Died *February* 15. 1719.

In a Letter to the Reverend

Mr. *Peter Newcome*, M. A.

Vicar of St. *John* at *Hackney*.

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1 Theſſ. iv. 13, 14. *But I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them that are aſleep, that ye ſorrow not even as others which have no Hope; for if we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe again, even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him.*

LONDON,

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A SHORT CHARACTER OF Mrs. *Mary Dolins.*

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I THANK you for your very kind and ready Compliance with my Requeſt; had I not met with conſiderable Interruptions yeſterday in the Afternoon, I had ſent you this Account much ſooner. What I have written, I would beg of you, with all Freedom, to take, or leave, juſt as you ſhall think proper; and ſo diſpoſe of it as to Order and Method, as you ſhall judge to be moſt convenient. I will beg leave to ſay one thing; that as

near as may be I have kept exactly to Truth, without Favour or Affection: Mrs. *Mary Dolins* was born in the Pariſh of St. *John* at *Hackney*, on the Second of *February*, 1703. From the very time of her Birth, and during her Infancy, ſhe was preſerved from Death, by ſome particular and remarkable Inſtances and Interpoſitions of a gracious, divine Providence. As ſoon as ſhe could diſcern between Good and Evil, or make any Judgment of things of a moral Nature, ſhe was uſed to divine Worſhip, and taught the Scriptures, and the Principles and Duties of our holy Religion, contained therein; ſhe very early ſhow'd a good Inclination to the Knowledge of God, and the Diſcharge of her Duty of every kind; and according to the Capacity of her Age, endeavoured, from her very Tender Years, to pleaſe and honour God her Maker. She had a quick Apprehenſion, a good diſcerning Judgment, a tenacious, ſtrong Memory, a ready Elocution, and fluent proper Way of ſpeaking; a modeſt, diſcreet Carriage in Converſation, not too free, and yet affable, courteous, and obliging; ſhe was very compaſſionate in her Temper, and thought none too young, too low, or mean to converſe with, in order to do them good, either in their Bodies or Souls, for Time or Eternity: And all

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theſe Endowments, which ſhe had received from the Author of her Being, and the Giver of every good and perfect Gift; it was her greateſt and moſt ardent Deſire, even to her dying Hour, ſhould be devoted to the Honour of God; and that He ſhould be, ſome Way or other, glorified thereby. She was very careful to diſcharge her whole Duty towards God in the firſt Place, without Limitation or Reſerve, and in the beſt Manner ſhe was able; and in the next Place, her Duty towards her ſuperior Relations; theſe ſhe obey'd and obſerv'd out of Choice, and with conſiderable Pleaſure; and though allowed to treat them with the Familiarity of a Friend or Equal, yet ſhe took care to manage that Liberty ſo prudently and well, as not only not to give Offence by Rudeneſs, but with all the nice and juſt Decorum, Deference and Obſervance, due from a Grand-child, Child, and Neice.

Her equal Relations, that is, her Brothers and Siſter, ſhe was not only affectionately Kind and Compaſſionate towards, but extreamly Helpful and Aſſiſtant to them in the beſt things, as well as thoſe of an inferior Nature; and was particularly pleaſed to obſerve, and give an Account of the good Inclinations they at any time manifeſted, towards that which was Serious and Religious. Her more diſtant

Relations

Relations ſhe entertained, not only with Courteſy, but Affection, and innocently agreeable Converſation; ſhe was courteous and obliging towards Perſons of all Ranks and Degrees, with whom ſhe had any Converſe, and glad to find out, or take any Opportunity that offer'd it ſelf, to be any ways uſeful and ſerviceable to them. The Aged, or thoſe that were older than her ſelf, were the Perſons ſhe choſe to keep Company with; and was a very careful Obſerver of what paſſed in ſuch Society, which might either help to amend what was amiſs in her ſelf, or improve her in any thing amiable, commendable, and virtuous; but would lament at the ſame time, that the Converſation, *even of theſe*, was not managed to better Purpoſes and more Advantage. But ſhe had likewiſe ſome few Intimates of about her own Age, in whoſe Company ſhe took Pleaſure from the Obſervation ſhe made of their ſober and virtuous Diſpoſitions; with ſome of whom ſhe would not only ſpeak of divine Things, but lend them good religious Books, the Peruſal whereof ſhe had found to have been of great Advantage to herſelf, to improve her in divine Knowledge, and form her Mind to anſwer the great Ends of her Creation. She had a great Contempt of the vain Pleaſures of Life, and ſhow'd an Indifference to thoſe things that Perſons of her

her Age and Circumſtances, are uſually very fond of, and value themſelves upon, and that *to ſuch a Degree*, as to *refuſe* the moſt free and liberal Offers of things of thoſe kinds; declaring the Height of her Ambition *as to Cloathing*, &c. not to be Finery or Richneſs of Apparel, or the like, but only ſo much, and of ſuch ſort as might preſerve her from the Charge of Singularity and Affectation. She ſeemed always pleaſed in a particular Manner, to receive from the Hands of her Parents, any Summs of Money, to be diſpos'd of by her, towards the promoting any Publick Good Deſign, which had an extenſive, powerful Influence towards the advancing the Glory of God, and the eminent Good of Mankind; and not only ſo, but even of the Gifts and Preſents ſhe received of Relations, to be laid out according to her own Diſcretion, ſhe choſe to employ a conſiderable Part of them in ſupplying the Wants and Neceſſities of ſuch Objects, as needed Aſſiſtance and Relief; nor could ſhe eaſily bear, that ſuch ſhould go away diſappointed of their Expectations. The Indiſpoſitions ſhe often laboured under, made her Mind ſometimes uneaſie, and diſcompoſed, which was no wonder, conſidering what was the Cauſe thereof; but then Reaſons and Arguments, eſpecially thoſe of a divine Kind, ſeldom, if ever

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fail'd of removing the ſame; and of giving her thoſe Supports and Comforts, as were ſuitable to her Caſe and Condition. The Care and Concern ſhe had for her immortal Soul betimes, appear'd very remarkably in this particular Inſtance; when ſhe was about eight Years Old, it pleaſed God to afflict her with a Sickneſs which required ſpeedily the Aſſiſtance of Phyſicians; while her Relations and Friends were attending about her, ſhe took notice to them, that they appeared more ſollicitous about the Recovery of her Health, and preſerving her Life, than the Good of her Soul, and earneſtly deſired that her neareſt Relation, then at ſome Diſtance from Home, ſhould be immediately ſent for (tho' late at Night) to come and aſſiſt her by Prayer and Advice; which was accordingly perform'd; and the next Day, being the Lord's-Day, ſhe would not be ſatisfy'd, unleſs the Whole of the Devotions uſual on that Day in the Family, were performed in the Chamber where ſhe lay; her Deſires herein were complied with, and ſhe not only bore the Whole, but was much delighted and comforted thereby, and from that time was both eaſy and chearful. She had a great Reverence for the Divine Majeſty, mixed with an ardent Love, and a humble, ſteadfaſt Truſt and Confidence in his Mercy and Goodneſs, through Je-

ſus

ſus Chriſt: The Bleſſed Jeſus ſhe likewiſe relied upon with comfortable Hope and Aſſurance, as her Lord, God, and Saviour, and firmly depended upon the Holy Spirit, for all Grace, Aſſiſtance, and Comfort; ſhe made Conſcience of, and very much delighted in the Publick and Private Exerciſes of Religion; ſhe was a very attentive Hearer; and if ſhe apprehended, ſhe had at any time failed in that Reſpect, ſhe would lament, and complain of it in her ſelf, as well as ſpeak of it with great Uneaſineſs, when ſhe had obſerved by their indecent, trifling Behaviour, others guilty of it in a notorious Degree, or Manner.

During her laſt Illneſs in the Countrey, when ſhe was debarr'd going to the Publick Worſhip, yet ſhe fail'd not of Employing her Time, eſpecially on the Lord's Day, in the Duties of Religion at Home, and was ſo ſtrict an Obſerver of Cloſet-Worſhip, and praying to her Father in ſecret, that ſhe would not, even under her great Infirmities, Pains, and Weakneſſes, omit the regular Performance of it at leaſt twice a Day.

She was very careful to be Sincere and True in all her Words and Actions, both towards GOD and Men: Her Sincerity towards GOD ſhe would herſelf frequently appeal to GOD for, in the Words of the

Psalmist, *Psal.* cxxxix. 23. according to Dr. *Patrick's* Version:

Lord, since my Thoughts acquit me not
Of Living in a false Disguise,
I'm less afraid to undergo
The Tryal of thy piercing Eyes.

And as to her Sincerity and Truth towards Men, her nearest Relations do not remember, even from her Infancy, ever to have found her in a *Lye*; to which, as she had no Temptation from Fear of the Consequences of telling the Truth, when she might have done amiss; so she was not observed to have any Dispositions tending towards Deceit or Falshood; being of an ingenuous, upright Temper.

She was early acquainted with her Catechism, and instructed so in the Principles of our Holy Religion, that she could readily bring a great many, and very substantial Proofs, from the Holy Scriptures, for all the Articles thereof. She often, and particularly in her last Sickness, heartily blessed God for having learned the same from her Childhood, and that they were fixed and rivetted in her Mind and Memory. The serious Reflexion on those many Texts of Scripture she had treasured up in the beforementioned Manner, together with the many useful Discourses from the Pulpit,

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(the Substance of which she afterwards very firmly retained, and could distinctly repeat to others) gave her, she said, a great deal of Comfort, Delight or Support in her waking, painful Hours of the Night; the like Benefit also she found by the excellent Discourses of that eminent Christian, and most Reverend Archbishop *Tillotson*, frequently read to her; and also by Dr. *Patrick*'s Select Psalms; many of which being exactly impressed on her Mind, and remembred by her, she could make Use of at her Pleasure: She would advise those that attended upon her in her last Illness in the Country, and at Home, to fear God and keep his Commandments, and to take Care of their Souls: She call'd upon them to take Notice how happy she was in the Love of all her Relations, who enjoyed whatsoever this World could afford; and were ready to give her whatsoever she could desire of them in their Power, or in Words to that Effect: yet all this was not to be compar'd with the Love and Favour of God, and the Happiness of the World to come; That Grace was vastly more desirable, and much to be preferr'd before Gold; she expressed often her Thoughts as to this Matter, in those two Lines of the xvi*th* Psalm in the above-mentioned Version:

Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* cxxxix. 23. according to Dr. *Patrick*'s Verſion:

Lord, ſince my Thoughts acquit me not
Of Living in a falſe Diſguiſe,
I'm leſs afraid to undergo
The Tryal of thy piercing Eyes.

And as to her Sincerity and Truth towards Men, her neareſt Relations do not remember, even from her Infancy, ever to have found her in a *Lye*; to which, as ſhe had no Temptation from Fear of the Conſequences of telling the Truth, when ſhe might have done amiſs; ſo ſhe was not obſerved to have any Diſpoſitions tending towards Deceit or Falſhood; being of an ingenuous, upright Temper.

She was early acquainted with her Catechiſm, and inſtructed ſo in the Principles of our Holy Religion, that ſhe could readily bring a great many, and very ſubſtantial Proofs, from the Holy Scriptures, for all the Articles thereof. She often, and particularly in her laſt Sickneſs, heartily bleſſed God for having learned the ſame from her Childhood, and that they were fixed and rivetted in her Mind and Memory. The ſerious Reflexion on thoſe many Texts of Scripture ſhe had treaſured up in the beforementioned Manner, together with the many uſeful Diſcourſes from the Pulpit,

(the Substance of which she afterwards very firmly retained, and could distinctly repeat to others) gave her, she said, a great deal of Comfort, Delight or Support in her waking, painful Hours of the Night; the like Benefit also she found by the excellent Discourses of that eminent Christian, and most Reverend Archbishop *Tillotson*, frequently read to her; and also by Dr. *Patrick*'s Select Psalms; many of which being exactly impressed on her Mind, and remembred by her, she could make Use of at her Pleasure: She would advise those that attended upon her in her last Illness in the Country, and at Home, to fear God and keep his Commandments, and to take Care of their Souls: She call'd upon them to take Notice how happy she was in the Love of all her Relations, who enjoyed whatsoever this World could afford; and were ready to give her whatsoever she could desire of them in their Power, or in Words to that Effect: yet all this was not to be compar'd with the Love and Favour of God, and the Happiness of the World to come; That Grace was vastly more desirable, and much to be preferr'd before Gold; she expressed often her Thoughts as to this Matter, in those two Lines of the xviith Psalm in the above-mentioned Version:

With what I have I'm pleaſed much,
With what I hope for more.

She expreſſed her full Truſt and Confidence in the Love and Favour of God her heavenly Father, and Bleſſed Redeemer *Jeſus Chriſt*; begg'd that Faith and Patience might hold out a little longer; often deſired (if it was the good Pleaſure of God) that ſhe might die; if otherwiſe, that it might be for his Glory; and intreated thoſe that came to ſee her, that they would pray for her, that ſhe might neither ſay nor do any thing diſpleaſing to God, or arguing Impatience under his Correction.

When ſome attending upon her would have made Uſe of the common Methods of Diverſion; ſhe replied with a kind of Indignation, you miſtake me, my Thoughts are in Heaven, and upon my Heavenly Father; ſhe ſaid, ſhe wiſhed that thoſe that Prayed with her for her Life, would rather help her to praiſe God, for that was now her Work; ſo far was ſhe from repining or murmuring under this Hand of God, that ſhe bleſſed God for it, long before it came to this Extremity; nay, ſhe would bleſs God for her weak Conſtitution of Body, as it helped to preſerve her from the Snares of the

World,

World, and fix'd her Eyes more ſteadily upon her heavenly Houſe, that could not be ſhaken, or taken down, as this earthly Tabernacle muſt.

On the Lord's-Day-Night before ſhe died, having waſted her Spirits that Day, by much ſpeaking to thoſe who came in a Chriſtian Manner to viſit her, and not being able to ſleep, nor had had any for a good time before, ſhe expreſſed the Awe that was upon her Mind, with Reſpect to Eternity, and that ſhe had ſinned againſt God, and not done ſo much as ſhe ought to have done for Him, and his Honour; but being put in Mind of that Text of Scripture, 1 *Cor.* xv. 55, 56, 57. That *the Sting of Death*, indeed, *is Sin, but Thanks be to God*, that he *hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; ſhe repeated the Words, Ay, Thanks be to God, who hath given *me* the Victory through *my* Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and not only then ſhewed ſhe was perfectly ſatisfied, but had afterwards no Appearance of the leaſt Doubt to her dying Minute; nor indeed had ſhe before, any fearful Apprehenſions concerning Death, it being her Deſire to die: Her Fear and Concern was chiefly employed, and expreſſed for the great Grief and Sorrow that her dear Relations, and other Friends, would be afflicted with upon her Death;

but

left as to her self, she was waiting with Patience till her Change came; she was able to speak very little on *Monday*, but at Night her Voice was somewhat better; for she since before she had said to the Person constantly attending upon her, Is not that Expression in our Lord's Prayer, *Thy Will be done*, a noble Word, or Saying? And it pleased God, that those Words should be the last Sentence she was to speak on Earth, which she repeated thrice, and with a particular Emphasis, *Thy Will be done, Thy Will be done, Thy Will be done, O Blessed Jesus!* and soon after she fell asleep in Jesus.

I have omitted a great many Things, which I am perswaded, would be equally Serviceable, as well as Delightful to hear or read; but I am sensible, I have already enlarged beyond the usual Compass of a Letter. The Lord grant that I may follow her Steps, and arrive safe at those Regions, and Mansions of Glory, into which she is entered before us. If it were necessary, I would make an Excuse for the Trouble I have given you, before I subscribe my self,

Dear SIR,

Your much Obliged
And Affectionate Friend,
And Humble Servant, *&c.*

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

Hackney, Feb. 27. 1719—20.

FINIS.